

with her off-spring clinging on to her. After some slight hesitation she risked the jump and landed safely on the wall, but, sad to relate, Master (or Miss) squirrel lost his (or her) grip and would have fallen on to the hard ground had not my Private Secretary, who was watching the performance from the foot of the lamp-post, caught it in mid-air and saved its tender limbs from the severe shock. The ungrateful mite showed its ingratitude to its rescuer by giving him a good bite and some scratches. In the meanwhile her mother safely lodged herself in the hole for which she had made that bold attempt.

I have often watched a pair of these interesting little creatures having a fight on the branch of a tree, frequently the defeated one falls to the ground, and even when the height has been great the squirrel has shown no sign of injury, though it reached "terra firma" with a loud thud.

A pretty sight which I witnessed one morning would lead to the belief that these active and noisy little people occasionally indulge in social amenities and enjoy a dance as much as human folk. The ball-room was the top of a pole and a party of 7 happy squirrels were going through a series of quite intricate evolutions as if they had been trained by a regular "maitre-de-ballet" and each time they turned on their haunches up went their tails simultaneously and in the most fascinating manner. Unfortunately I have only seen this Revue (or whatever the squirrel name for the dance may be) on this one occasion.

While writing this article this morning I saw a squirrel dancing of her own accord over the nails stuck on the top of a wall. The top of the wall was secured with French nails (wire nails) about 4 inches high, sharp and pointed.

DHAR, DHAR STATE,
August 1924.

UDAJI RAO PUAR,
Maharaja of Dhar (C.I.).

NO. VII.—HABITS OF THE BROWN FLYING SQUIRREL
(*PETAURISTA PHILIPENSIS*).

While on Mammal Survey work in South India (Pulni Hills), I had occasion to observe these beautiful animals in their natural state. These squirrels, like the rest of their kind, are nocturnal in their habits; coming out when it is nearly dark. The day is spent in the hollows of trees and among dense foliage. A common hiding place is amongst the dried fronds of the tree fern. They always seem to return to the same hiding place especially if it be a hollow in a tree. Sometimes as many as two or three may occupy the same dwelling place.

When disturbed during the day, they escape by climbing up a tree as far as is necessary and then parachuting to the next tree and continuing to do so until out of danger. As a rule, they are reluctant to leave their hollow or hiding place by day. On one occasion I came across a pair in a hole in the trunk of a tree and one of them had its tail hanging out, I fired at the tail two or three times in spite of which the animal refused to come out; so eventually I sent up a man to poke them out which he did. I secured both specimens and on examining them I found that one had part of its tail nearly severed from the body.

These squirrels parachute a considerable distance sometimes nearly as much as a hundred yards. When alighting on the trunk of a tree they do so almost noiselessly, the only sound being a slight "tut". Their flight from one tree to another is downwards and then slightly upwards. At another time one of these, in the course of its flight, passed above a small tree, it suddenly shot downwards and alighted on the opposite side of the tree to which it would have originally landed.

I have known these animals to parachute on to spiny stemmed trees and not show any sign of their being hurt in the least.